

[श्री नरधू राम अहिरवार]

वी जाती है। इस के अलावा प्रत्येक ग्राम पंचायत को चीनी का कोटा नहीं मिलता है। इस लिए गावों के लोगों को चीनी के लिये पन्द्रह बीस मील दूर किसी कस्बे में जाना पड़ता है। ऐसा भी होता है कि जब वे दुकान पर जाते हैं तो कह दिया जाता है कि कोटा खत्म हो गया है।

इसलिये हमारी वितरण व्यवस्था में सुधार लाना अत्यावश्यक है। चीनी का कोटा किसी इंडिविजुअल को न देकर ग्राम पंचायतों या को-ऑपरेटिव सोसाइटीयों के माध्यम से चीनी का वितरण कराया जाये ताकि जिस व्यक्ति को जितनी भी मात्रा में मिलती है उसे वह गांव में ही ले सके उसको शहर में लेने के लिये न जाना पड़े। इस प्रकार वितरण व्यवस्था को सुधारा जाये।

18 hrs.

हर साल सरकार टैक्स तो लगा देती है लेकिन उसकी वसूली हो नहीं पाती है। इस और आप ध्यान दें। टैक्स इवैजन को आप रोके। कागज में तो कह दिया जाता है कि टैक्स लगा दिया गया लेकिन वसूली हो नहीं पाती। आपकी मशीनरी में काफी दोष है। मशीनरी को आप टाइटन अप करें। वसूली करने वाले उन्ही बड़े बड़े-लोगों के घरों पर स्वागत करा कर चले-जाते हैं और छोटे टैक्स पेयर्स को हिरास कर लेते हैं। दो चार केसिस ऐसे बना देते हैं जिससे मालूम पड़े कि वे बहुत काम कर रहे हैं। देखें-जैसे पहले एक रुपया पैनलटी लगती थी अब दस लगने लगी। वे क्या करते हैं—उनसे कहा गया कि पच्चीस रोज बिना टिकट यात्रियों से वसूल करें। तो वे दो आदमियों को पकड़ कर पच्चीस रुपया जमा करा देते हैं और बाकी सारा पैसा अपनी जेब में रख लेते हैं। और टैक्सों में भी इसी तरह होता है। ऐसे लोगों के खिलाफ कड़ी कार्यवाही होनी चाहिये। जो पैसा एरिजर्ज में है उसको वसूल किया जाना चाहिये।

आर्थिक साधन बढ़ाने के लिये जो स्माल सेविंग्स तथा दूसरी स्कीमें हैं उनको अच्छी तरह आप लागू करें। जो लोग पैसा जमा करें उनको जैसे आपने अभी तक तीन हजार रुपये की इनकम टैक्स में छूट दे रखी है उस लिमिट को बढ़ा कर पांच हजार कर दे ताकि पैसा आये और देश की अर्थ-व्यवस्था को सुधारने में लगे।

18.01 hrs.

HALF-AN-HOUR DISCUSSION

SHORTAGE OF KEROSENE OIL IN STATES

MR. CHAIRMAN: We shall now take up the Half an Hour Discussion on the shortage of kerosene oil in the States.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU (Diamond Harbour): Mr. Chairman, I really do not know if there is any genuine shortage of kerosene in the country, but no man can buy kerosene at the right price, and the reasons are very clear to all of us now. There need not be any scarcity for scarcity could very well be engineered with the patronage of the ruling class, and the dividends are quite attractive.

The kerosene business is causing serious hardship to people, specially in rural areas and that too to students who cannot study their lessons in the night for want of kerosene. Then, the kerosene-operated small-scale economic activities have come to a standstill. As you know, the growth of our electrification has been next to nothing, and today the position is: no kerosene, no electricity and no coal—this is the wonderful achievement of the ruling class.

Coming to price and cut, Government have stated in reply to a question of mine, Unstarred Question No. 876, on the 26th February:

"The retail price of kerosene oil varies from State to State, depending on the quantum of the local taxes."

He says that the price in Delhi is 87 paise per litre. I do not know where you can get kerosene at that price. Shri Borooah should give us a list of addresses where we can get it at that price. Then he says:

"The State Governments have been empowered under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 to take action against those found guilty of overcharging."

But that is never done. Then he says:

"It became necessary to reduce the production of kerosene oil in the refineries and correspondingly increase the production of diesel oil and furnace oil to meet the higher priority requirements of power and transport. A uniform cut in kerosene supplies of 15 per cent in January and 20 per cent in February 1974 was, therefore, made on the allocations made to the States."

The last paragraph is very pious indeed.

"All State Governments have been advised to ensure equitable distribution of the available supplies and to take steps against...black-market..."

These are all in letters only; nothing is done in action. The whole thing is untrue. If you see the diesel production figures, then you cannot lose sight of the fact that there is a wide-spread shortage of diesel all over the country. So, the reasoning that has been given in reply to the question has no basis at all.

Then, the cut has been very fantastic—a cut of 15 per cent in January 1974 and again a cut of 20 per cent in February 1974. Before that, in 1973, if I remember right, there had been numerous cuts. Kerosene quotas to the States were cut by 10 per cent in the month of March/April and 25 per cent in May and another 10 per cent in June 1973. Now you can well calculate where we are and whether the cut was only 10 or 15 per cent.

Of course, during the UP elections it looked quite otherwise. Shri Bahuguna promised them a kerosene bath, of course on an empty stomach. The allocation for UP for May 1973 was 20,448 metric tonnes and in November 1973 it was 29,000 metric tonnes. As it came nearer to the elections, it was increased to 58,000 metric tonnes. The cut was 35 per cent in 1974. Even the quotas that they had promised to the States, after the cut, have not been given.

Here is a piece of news from a very important national daily, the *Hindustan Standard* dated 30th September, 1973 which says:

"...the Indian Oil Company which supplies 80 per cent of the kerosene...."

Mr. S. B. Roy, Commissioner of Food and Supplies made enquiries and found out that only 60 per cent of the quota was supplied by the I.O.C. Agents and transport operators have the same story to tell."

These things are only on paper. Nothing comes to reality. Surprisingly, the Government has contradicted the news with regard to the cut. I can quote many things which will convince you.

There was an Unstarred question by Shri S. M. Banerjee and the reply was:

"The overall kerosene availability in the country is more than adequate to meet the total requirements."

This reply was given on November-13, 1973.

Again, in reply to Unstarred Question No. 3200 dated 4th December, 1973, the Minister said:

"Adequate inventories of kerosene oil however exist at present to meet the country's requirement in full."

[Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu]

Then, in reply to Unstarred Q. No. 5795 dated April 3, 1973, the Minister said:

"The Government of India have a long-term Trade Agreement for the period 1971-75 with the USSR and this Agreement provides, apart from other items, the import of superior kerosene and high speed diesel oils also every year. The Trade Plan provision for the current year i.e. 1973 provides for the import of 50 lakh tonnes of kerosene oil and 10 lakh tonnes of high speed diesel oil. Against this provision, IOC has negotiated for the import of 550 lakh tonnes of superior kerosene oil during 1973. ICC will be signing a contract with the USSR suppliers in this regard shortly. This quantity of 550 lakh tonnes of kerosene oil is in addition to the quantity of 080 lakh tonnes of kerosene oil that is being supplied during the current year under the contract signed for the year 1972."

This is a very impressive reply. But when it comes to finding a quantity of kerosene oil for ready use by a small man, it is not available. If you willing to pay the price, you can get as much as you want, may be Rs 2-3 a litre. In Eastern UP, I found it was being sold at Rs 4 a litre, that too adulterated.

In another Unstarred Q No 1042 dated 27-2-73, the Minister gave the figures of production and imports of kerosene oil. It says:

"Following are the indigenous production and imports for the years 1971 and 1972 and anticipations for 1973.

(Figures in 000M's)

	Kerosene	1972	Anticipations
	1971		1973
Productions	2995	2817	3171
Imports	599	830	730
Total	3594	3647	3901

But the bluff is easily found out when they say that they have effect a cut from early 1973.

Here is another interesting piece of document before me. In reply to Starred Q No 94 dated 25th February, 1974, the Minister says

"It will not be in the public interest to disclose the actual stocks of individual oil products or of their actual consumption."

This House is the supreme national forum of this country. If this House has not got the authority and right to know a simple information as this which is causing so much of hardship to people whom we represent, it is better we do not waste time and we go home. May I ask the hon Minister to be good enough to speak the truth for a change as to why he does not wish to disclose this information to the House. What is the secret about it?

"There is, however, a shortage of diesel oil against anticipated demands. Production of Kerosene oil, therefore, is reduced in the refineries to correspondingly increase the production of diesel oil."

The same old story which means nothing at all to me. May I ask, Mr Borooah, after reciting all these impressive figures before this House and before the country, why is there a shortage? Why has a man to pay three times or four times the price you have fixed? Why is it so? You have not done electrification. A man has to live either in darkness or he has to buy some kerosene. And a young child or a young boy has to give up his home work in the evening because he cannot get light. And you have been talking about Plans, Progress, Socialism and Democracy? Twenty-seven years you have ruled this country and you have brought it to this condition to-day.

Your Central Act, the Essential Commodities Act, is again a matter to which I should laugh. You cannot punish the black-marketeers and hoarders because they protect you, they

finance you, they contribute to your Party funds. They subscribe, donate money for your election fund. So you cannot touch them. I have got certain cases. Now it is very clear. This is one of the papers of the Swatantra Party—*The Statesman*. What does it say? It says:

"The day the police were postedto check the supply from the IOC installation at Maurigram, Howrah, to the dealers there was an unrestricted flow of kerosene to the retailers shops in Calcutta. That was towards the end of September." Can you tell us....

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member's time is up.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: You come from a highly electrified area, Sir?

MR. CHAIRMAN: You please finish in another four or five minutes. You must know that four more members have to participate and then the Minister has to reply.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: You appreciate my difficulty. You are a kind and considerate man.

Then the paper says:

"The fault lies in the distribution system. It is now clear that after the agents had taken delivery of kerosene at Maurigram, the essential commodity went underground."

Mr. Borooah, why do you do this? If you want to do it, then tell the people, 'We are the agents of the State's blackmarketeers and hoarders; take it or leave it and we are the agents. We cannot do it.' Sir, here is a case...

SHRI B. V. NAIK (Kanara): We have left it to you to say....(Interruptions)

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Is it causing blisters on your body, Mr. Daga?....(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is not much time. Please do not interrupt him.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Neither can you name me at the fag end of the day.

Then, it does on to say:

"The situation radically improved when the police noted the number of each loaded lorry and its place of destination and sent a wireless message immediately to the police station in whose area the dealer's godown was situated. What was a vague surmise proved to be correct. Kerosene supply to the retailers' shops immediately improved. Each lorry kerosene-filled reached its declared destination...."

There has been virtually no supervision over the distribution of kerosene. Government officials entrusted with the task took little notice of the malpractices. The police were withdrawn from the depot entrance a few days ago and the entire distribution system is now again at the mercy of the agents men. It is now keenly felt that effective Government machinery must supervise the distribution to ensure a free flow of kerosene."

This is the position. In kerosene, a real shortage may be or may not be; if it is so then it may be very marginal. But, Mr. Devakanta Borooah, the hon. Minister and his Party—their friendship with these people, that is what is troubling us. Then, another paper says:

"Even on-the-spot distribution of kerosene by tankers was faulty. The department introduced the system to supplement the supply where there were no petrol pumps."

The whole thing is a well-engineered, hand-in-glove, well-patronised, Government-aided and abetted affair. There was one case of 5,000 litres of hoarded kerosene seized. So, that is the position.

[Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu]

A word about the price. Mr. Borooah the hon. Minister, may I tell you that I have a report of the Estimates Committee. It is a little old but, here, it is old gold because since then, in this country, the price has risen by leaps and bounds.

What are the prices? Kerosene price in India is one of the highest in the whole world. Take for example U. K. and the London price. These figures are in U. S. Cent per U. S. Gallon. In London it is 23.0. In India it is 34.2 plus duty, plus taxes at three per cent. Take for example Canada, which is much more affluent. There it is 20.1 and the other things are very negligible. In Burma it is 21.2; in Australia it is 27.1; in Ceylon it is 13. We have got the lowest GNP and the lowest per capita income and I would like the hon. Minister to tell us why the kerosene user should be called upon to pay so much more than those people who are more affluent than that. There is of course the attack of Mr Chavan who has just disappeared and for the Excise Department kerosene has become a kamadhenu and they go on milking it as often as they like. The latest is 15 paise a litre. During last year they gave a big bite and took a chunk of human flesh in their mouth and that was 28 paise a litre and after lot of battering and bettle over here they reduced it by 10 paise and brought it to 18 paise. Therefore all that I want to say to my hon. friend sitting opposite is this Don't make a mincemeat of everything than you touch. Kerosene is a commodity used by the common man. You or your Prime Minister may not use. I don't know if you are getting some sort of atomic capsule for your lighting and air-conditioning your bungalows. That I don't know. But the poor man requires it for lighting; the poor student requires to burn the lamp and for doing his home work. How miserably you have failed. You have made a mess of the whole thing. How miserably you have surrendered to the big

monopolists, to tycoons, to blackmarketeers and hoarders. This matter of kerosene is an example. And, if you cannot improve the situation you are not worth the salt, better resign and get out.

SHRI B. V. NAIK (Kanara): I would like to know one thing from the hon. Minister. He has stated that all State Governments have been advised to ensure equitable distribution.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Don't take it seriously....

SHRI B. V. NAIK: I will not; neither will I take it seriously, nor would I like to indulge in the sort of witch-hunting of the ruling party's money or fund-collecting which Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu is indulging in. But even Mr. Bosu will agree that even if one takes or one party takes money from some capitalists in this country it is better than to take it from abroad as some of the parties in this country are getting ..

SHRI NOORUL HUDA (Cachar). It is quite off the mark....

SHRI B. V. NAIK: Sir, I would like to know whether there are any sanction which the Ministry of Petroleum and Chemicals is able to impose on those State Governments which do not ensure an equitable distribution. Stated in plain terms, I want to know this. I want to know whether you have a system whereby,—in respect of those States which do not conform to your advice, to the Centre's advice, because of lack of a proper public distribution system, and where the kerosene in adequate quantity or even with the reduced quota does not reach the consumer,—you have tried to impose certain sanctions. In other words I want to know whether you have a system of rewards and of punishments so that good States are rewarded with bigger quotas and bad States are getting curtailed quotas. This is the only way in which the situation can be remedied. So, I want to know whether

he has given any thought to it or whether,—in the words of Mr. Jyotirmoy Bose,—it is only a simple and plain pious wish that they will do the equitable distribution. That is all my question.

*SHRI E. R. KRISHNAN (Salem):
Mr. Chairman, Sir, the allocation of kerosene to the States was cut by 15 per cent in January, 1974 and by another 20 per cent in February, 1974. It is also reported that another 15 per cent cut has been imposed in March, 1974. Totally, the allocation of Kerosene to the States has been cut by 50 per cent.

Besides this from March 1, 1974, the price of Kerosene has been raised by 15 paise per litre. While in Delhi it is sold at Re. 1 per litre, in the States the price is more.

Even the 50 per cent allocation does not reach the States because of the non-availability of container wagons. Only 25 per cent of the allocation reaches the States. The allocation to the States is cut by 50 per cent, out of which only 25 per cent reaches the States on account of non-availability of container wagons. The price is also raised frequently. You can well imagine the plight of the poor people.

I would like to know from the Minister of Petroleum whether he will get in touch with the Railway Minister to ensure the availability of container wagons so that the allocation of 50 per cent reaches the States.

Secondly, the freight increase in the 1974-75 Railway Budget has also increased the price of Kerosene further in the States. I would like to know from him whether he will persuade his colleague Railway Minister who has himself accepted that the freight increase will push up the price of Kerosene, to withdraw the freight increase at least so far as Kerosene is concerned.

श्री रामाबतार शास्त्री (पटना) :
हमारे देश में कैरोसीन भ्रायल और तेल की स्थिति गम्भीर और दयनीय है। इसको आप भी जानते हैं। मंत्री जी बिहार के राज्यपाल रूढ़ चुके हैं बहुत दिनों तक और वह जानते हैं कि बिहार की जनता बहुत गरीब है। वहाँ का अनुभव मुझे है और दिल्ली का भी है। दिल्ली में झुग्गी झोंपड़ियों में 15 लाख लोग रहते हैं। उनको बिबरी जलाने के लिये भी कैरोसीन भ्रायल नहीं मिल रहा है। इसके दाम भी बहुत अधिक हैं और मिलता भी मसानी से नहीं है। उन लोगों को बाँधेर में ही खाना खाना पड़ता है। यह स्थिति पूरे देश की है। दिल्ली की भी है। इसमें कोई अतिशयोक्ति नहीं है। प्रश्न के उत्तर में आपने कहा है कि 85 पैसे लिटर दाम दिल्ली में थे। अब वह 99 पैसे आपने और बढ़ा दिये हैं। इस तरह से वे 99 पैसे हो गये हैं एक लिटर के। लेकिन 99 पैसे में एक बोतल भी ठीक से नहीं मिलती है लोगों को और एक बोतल लिटर से कम होती है। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या 99 पैसे में एक लिटर देहातों में कैरोसीन भ्रायल उपलब्ध है, यदि नहीं, तो इस दिशा में सरकार ने कौन सी कार्रवाई की है और क्या उसका नतीजा निकला है ?

राज्य सरकारों ने अत्यावश्यक वस्तु अधिनियम, 1955 के अन्तर्गत मुनाफाखोरों और तेल की और बाजारी करने वालों के विरुद्ध क्या कोई कार्यवाई की है और की है तो उसके आंकड़े बताए जायें कि कितनों के खिलाफ और किस प्रकार की कार्यवाई की है ? क्या ऐसे लोगों के लाइसेंस भी रद्द किये गये हैं यदि हाँ, तो उनका राज्यवार ब्यौरा क्या है ?

राज्यों की जाने वाली भापूर्ति में कटौती करने से क्या कीमतों में वृद्धि नहीं हुई है, अगर हुई है तो सरकार ने इसकी रोकथाम करने की क्या व्यवस्था की है ?

[श्री रामावतार शास्त्री]

कैरोसीन तेल के उत्पादन में कमी करने से डीजल और फरनेस तेल के उत्पादन में कितने परसेंट की वृद्धि हुई है तथा उनके मूल्यों पर इसका क्या प्रभाव पड़ा है ?

क्या यह सच है कि डीजल तेल के अभाव में देहातों में सिंचाई पम्प चलने बड़े पैमाने पर बन्द हो गये हैं जिससे अनाज की पैदावार पर बुरा असर पड़ रहा है ? यदि हाँ, तो किसानों को डीजल तेल की निश्चित सप्लाई करने की आपने कौन सी व्यवस्था की है ?

क्या डीजल की कमी का असर ट्रकों के चलने पर भी पड़ा है यदि हाँ तो ट्रकों को आपने डीजल की सप्लाई करने के लिये क्या बन्दोबस्त किया है और उसका क्या नतीजा निकला है क्या नतीजा आपके सामने आया है ?

श्री मूल चन्द्र डागा (पाली) : कैरोसीन की कमी को लेकर क्या आपने स्टेट्स के सप्लाई मिनिस्टर्स की कोई मीटिंग बुलाई है और उनको कोई गाइडलाइज दी है ।

जिन गांवों में बिजली है और ज्यादा है वहाँ के लिए तथा उन राज्यों के लिये आपने कैरोसीन की सप्लाई में कमी की है और जहाँ बिजली कम है और केवल कैरोसीन पर ही वे निर्भर रहते हैं वहाँ आपने कैरोसीन की उपलब्धि ज्यादा की है, यदि हाँ, तो किस हद तक ?

घरेलू उद्योगों के वास्ते कैरोसीन देने का क्या आपने कोई तरीका निकाला है और इसके बारे में आपने कोई गाइडलाइज स्टेट्स को दी है ? यदि हाँ, तो क्या आपने यह भी देखा है कि स्टेट्स आपकी गाइडलाइज पर अमल कर रही हैं या नहीं कर रही हैं ? जो नहीं कर रही हैं उनसे आपने इसके बारे में कोई लिखा पढ़ी की है और किसी स्टेट को पाबन्द किया है इसके लिए ?

एसेशियल कमोडिटीज एक्ट के अन्तर्गत आपने आज तक कितने आंदमियों को काला

बाजार करने के अपराध में पकड़ा है ? काला बाजार में चार पाच पैसे की बोतल के हिसाब से तेल बिकता है । ऐसे लोगों के खिलाफ आपने कोई एक्शन लिया है यदि हाँ, तो कितनों को और क्या सजा दी है ?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI D. K. BOROOAH): Sir, I am grateful to Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu for raising this issue on the Floor of this House. It is a fact that the supply of petroleum products in this country has reduced because there has been shortfall in the supplies of the crude in this country. There has also been a shortfall in the production of Cochin refinery to the tune of a little more than 1 million tonnes which was expanded from 2.5 million tonnes to 3.3 million tonnes per annum in the later half of 1973. Firstly, there was non-availability of tankers because one of the principal contractor just walked out of the contract without giving us notice because the freight rates had gone high.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Who is that contractor?

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH, Triton Shipping Company.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Who own them?

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: This must be American.

Then after that there was shortfall in availability of crude also because the Arabs used to supply us crude. All told there was a shortfall of one million tonnes. Then there was *pro rata* cut by the oil companies, that is, Burmah Shell and Caltex which was around 15 per cent. ESSO have not introduced a cut although at one time they informed us there will be cut *pro rata* not because the supplies have been reduced by Arab countries but because there was overall shortage in their supplies. That has reduced somewhat the total availability of crude. That

comes to around one million tonnes crude; as against 22 or 23 million tonnes, the shortage would be of the order of one million tonnes in crude and another 15 per cent of 2.5 and 5.5 million tonnes. Even so as you know, kerosene or for that matter diesel is a commodity which is used at a particular level of consumption.

In this country, we used to import kerosene to the extent of a little more than half a million tonnes from the Soviet Union. This time, they were good enough to give us one million tonnes. But kerosene transportation during winter from Russia is fraught with many difficulties because many of their ports are clogged with ice or because there are other difficulties. They start coming around May, June and July. So, there is a shortfall, I would not say, basic but certainly marginal. But at this particular point of time....

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: So, he agree with me there.

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: In this country there has always been an adjustment between kerosene and diesel. As hon. Members know, they all constitute the middle distillates. Kerosene can be converted into diesel and diesel can be converted into kerosene.

The demand for diesel is seasonal. During certain seasons, for ploughing for pumps, both LDO and diesel are in great demand. Again, at the time of harvesting, it is in great demand. So, at this point of time last year also we had reduced the consumption of kerosene because we had to increase the production of diesel. So, that was how there was a cut which was started last year. Last year, it went up to 25 per cent. Because of power shortage, the demand for diesel had gone up. Therefore, the cut was of the order of 25 per cent. This time also there has been a great shortage of power because of lack of winter rains, as is known to hon. Members. There has been already a power cut of 50

per cent in UP as well as in Punjab with the result that the demand for diesel has gone up.

I shall give a few figures about the supply of diesel to these two States, because these are the main diesel-consuming States for agricultural purposes. In February, 1973, the total supply to Punjab was 24,211 k.l. of diesel. This year, in February, we have supplied them 33,215 k.l. In the case of Haryana, last year in February, the supply was 11,719 k.l. and this year, we have supplied them 12,673 k.l. In the case of UP at this time last year the supply of diesel was 21,090 k.l. and this year we have given them 30,139 k.l.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Because of the elections.

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: I shall give him the election figures also. Let him please be a little patient.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Very patient, I have been for the last 27 years.

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: If he had been more patient, he would have been more effective in this House.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: I do not wish to be more effective here as it is.

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: With his habit of exaggeration, he sometimes makes a mess of his speech.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Doctor, heal thyself?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister was patient when the hon. Member was speaking.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: He was dozing.

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: I am only imitating him. As you know Sir, imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: He may be a man of letters but he need not use that on me.

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: I was only trying to imitate him. As you know, I am not a good speaker. I can only place the facts as I have got them before the House and it is for the House to come to a judgment. I am telling the facts. It is for the House to judge them.

I am telling the facts. It is for the House to judge them.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Half facts.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let him place facts before the House. It is for the House to judge them.

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: As I said, there is another aspect to this. In this country, it has been found long ago that a lot of people were buying kerosene and utilising it as diesel, because they are interchangeable and can be mixed. They belong to the same middle distillates group. The price differential between kerosene and diesel was 20 P. Therefore, a lot of kerosene was used as diesel. Because now kerosene price and diesel price is more or less the same, therefore, there is no point in converting kerosene into diesel. Therefore, the demand for diesel has gone up by 18 per cent. This is about diesel.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Without making a mess of your speech, will you say why is it that if you want supply of kerosene or diesel at a fair and proper price, you do not get it but if you are willing to pay the price the other party wants, you can get as much as you want? Why is it so, if the shortage is real, if the shortage is basic? It is not shortage only. It is a question of shortage plus greed.

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: I will neither contest nor accept it. None-

theless, it is a fact that people with money buy up things and store them also. It is a fact of life in this country and I suppose it is the duty of Government as well as the public to see that that is not done.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: They have enough. Do not sprinkle salt on their wounds.

SHRI B. V. NAIK: There is also the element of fiction in what Shri Bosu is saying besides the fact of life

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Concretise it.

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: I will tell you another.

About the supply of kerosene, I have certain figures. This is for 1974 January, February and March. In January, UP had 26,743 kls; in February it was reduced to 20,812 kls; in March it was slightly reduced to 21,875 kls. So you will have seen that during the election, it was reduced.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: About the allocation of kerosene to UP, I have given the figures and I stand by them.

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: I am giving the figures for January, February and March 1974. These are the election months.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: I will give you figures.

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: I also give my figures. You check on them.

As regards Orissa, in January it was 4,379 MTS. In kerosene it is in tonnes; in certain other things, it is in kilo litres. There is a marginal difference. In February it was 4,570. In March it is 4,772. There is no difference.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Let it go on record that I will produce enough evidence which makes me say what I have said, and I stand by this. He should be prepared.

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: I am a very humble and reasonable man. If he gives figures, I will certainly scrutinise them. If he is found to be in the right, certainly I will accept it. certainly I have no hesitation in saying this.

As regards West Bengal, in January they had 16,952 MTS, in February it was 17,589 MTS and in March 19,094 MTS. So we had given them on the basis of requirements and not on the basis of any political motivations. That is what I want to submit.

The other basic thing he raised was about the price. It has already been discussed in the House. So far as the price is concerned, the price of crude is reflected in the price of petroleum products. This has been the practice here. This has been accepted by Government. The Shantilal Shah Committee had said that a 10 cents increase per barrel would be reflected in a 44 per cent rise. That has been accepted. We have done it not now, but done it earlier also. The price at which we are buying now is around 11½ dollars; 11.38 in some places, 11.52 in others—so 11½ dollars. We have fixed the price at eight dollars, because we have mixed up our own crude and the foreign crude, the imported crude, and fixed a medium, at a particular point. On the basis of that, it has been increased. But while increasing it, we did not increase it across the board. Had we done it across the board, then the per litre price of kerosene and all the products would have risen by 45 paise, but we allowed an increase of only 15 paise in kerosene and diesel, whereas in certain items like naphtha for petro-chemicals we have raised it to a fantastic proportion, and that has been done because we have to protect the common man's fuel, kerosene, as well as HSD which is meant, apart from industry, for agricultural production and development, more than for industry, particularly for pump sets for tractors; and now it will be used extensively in certain areas of India, the granaries of India,

for harvesting and bringing the food-grains to the godowns. Therefore, we have to have diesel oil as much as is required. Evidently, there has been a great demand for diesel oil this time because of the shortage of rainfall, as a consequence of which there has been a deterioration or a reduction in the availability of power, and that is why we have done it.

As I said, ours is a federal structure, and so the States have their own autonomy as embodied in the Constitution. Therefore, the implementation of the Essential Commodities Act and distribution is the responsibility of the States. But we have written to the States, spoken to them and have had discussions with them. Their ministers were coming all the time and meeting us, and they have taken certain measures which I would like to read out. This is the information which they have furnished. Andhra Pradesh...

SHRI M. C. DAGA: What were the guidelines issued by the Centre to the States?

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: These are the guidelines. We must see that there is equitable distribution and see that the hoarders are punished.

SHRI M. C. DAGA: No fair distribution in the States. Those who are vocal get kerosene; the others do not get it. In villages there is no kerosene; that is the whole problem. People in the villages are living in the dark.

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: As the hon Member knows, this is the responsibility of the States. (*Interruptions*) How can I deal with them, and what authority have I got over them?

SHRI THA KIRUTTINAN (Sivaganja): The Minister was saying that the distribution is the responsibility of the States. I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether the requirements of the State Govern-

[Shri Jha Kiruttianan]

ments are being met. (Interruption). He was saying that distribution is being made according to requirements.

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: But subject to the cut, as I said. If the hon. Member is referring to Tamil Nadu, so far as Tamil Nadu is concerned...

SHRI B. V. NAIK: With the indulgence of the Chair, may I ask one question? If you think that it is entirely the business and the funeral of the State Governments,—since ours is a federal State—why we do we discuss this problem here? This means the cutting of the Indian citizen into two, something connected with the States and something connected with the Centre. So, when some people ask us, "What about kerosene?", we will be able to say that Parliament never discusses kerosene and it is entirely the business of the State Governments. Why should the hon. Minister try to reply regarding kerosene? Leave it to the entire discretion of the States. Let us be rational about it. We understand that India is a Union of States. India that is Bharat is a Union of States; we cannot cut out a citizen into something of a State subject, something of a Central subject and something of concurrent subject. His requirements are united.

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: The fact remains that under our Constitution the distribution of these products and the implementation of the Act are the responsibility of the State Governments. Certainly we co-operate with the State Governments, even though some State Governments belong to some other party. For instance the State Government of Tamilnadu is that of a different party. If the hon. Member referred to the State Minister of Industries, he would tell him that there was shortage of diesel last time. I sent a whole shipload of diesel oil to Madras... (Interruptions) This time I have not heard from Mr. Karunanidhi or Mr. Mano-

haran that there was any large scale difficulty. If there are complaints I shall look into them.

SHRI B. V. NAIK: The Centre is soft to Governments of Opposition Parties; we know that; it may be Kerala or Tamilnadu.

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: I am neither soft nor hard. I only try to be just and fair. I have no preferences because if there is shortage in Tamilnadu an Indian citizen suffers and if there is shortage in West Bengal, there also it is the Indian citizen who suffers. I do not make any distinction.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Tell us about the action you took against hoarders and blackmarketeers.

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: With regard to Andhra Pradesh, no information is available on cases of black-marketing of kerosene but they have written that whenever there is violation of the licences, licensing authorities have been cancelling the licences as well as the dealership of such persons. Assam has not sent any report In Arunachal Pradesh, no blackmarketing is reported. In Bihar seven cases of blackmarketing were detected and three licences were cancelled and the rest of the cases are under investigation. There is no report from Chandigarh. The number of cases of black-marketing of kerosene in Delhi is 41; out of these the licences of two dealers have been cancelled. Delhi Administration proposes not to grant dealerships to such people in future. In Gujarat 13 cases were detected; four case cases are pending trial in courts and nine cases are under police investigation. Two cases of black-marketing were detected in Haryana and in one case licence was cancelled. The dealership is not granted in cases of black-marketing. I have got no report from Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, Mizoram Megha-

laya, and Manipur In Maharashtra 76 cases were detected, in 8 cases dealerships were cancelled and security deposits were forfeited in three cases and dealership barred in one case 18 cases were detected in Orissa, in one case dealership was cancelled and in two cases dealership was suspended The rest are under trial or investigation No cases were reported in Pondicherry 25 cases of blackmarketing were detected in Punjab during the last six months Dealership in two cases was cancelled 11 cases have been registered with police for investigation In 12 cases either the securities have been forfeited or licences have been cancelled temporarily for one or two months Fifteen cases were detected in Rajasthan and in three cases security deposit was forfeited Three licences had been suspended Nine cases are pending In Tamil Nadu, 23 cases of black-marketing in kerosene were detected In one case the dealership was cancelled Seven cases are pending trial In eight cases the accused were non-licences and hence they were convicted In 3 cases further action was dropped by the Collectors Four cases are under consideration of the Collectors The State Government does not propose to grant dealerships to such people in future

In Uttar Pradesh, no case of black-marketing in kerosene oil has been detected In May 1973, Collectors were asked to regulate the distribution equitably and take stringent action against hoarders and black-marketeers for irregularities in maintenance of records, hoarding withholding stock from sale, unauthorised sale of kerosene oil and infringement of the provisions of the Uttar Pradesh Kerosene Control Order Nineteen prosecutions were launched 98 licences were suspended and 23 licences were cancelled during the period May-July 1973

In case of West Bengal, no case of black-marketing in kerosene oil has

been detected Particulars about black-marketing by the retail dealers in districts, if any, are not readily available as the District Magistrates, Deputy Commissioners are their licensing authorities Information in this regard is being collected

In Tripura, eight cases were detected Only in one case dealership has been cancelled In the other seven cases, there were no licences, and therefore, the question of cancellation of dealership in these seven cases does not arise Persons known to have indulged in unfair practices are never selected as kerosene dealers

In the case of Karnataka, 46 cases were detected on account of black-marketing of kerosene One licence has been cancelled and 45 cases are under prosecution Licence has been cancelled by the State Government for contravention of the provisions of the Karnataka Kerosene Dealers Licensing Order, 1969

As regards Goa, Daman and Diu, one case of sale of kerosene at a higher price than fixed by the Government has been detected The case is pending in the Court of the District Magistrate When a final decision is taken the oil companies will be advised for necessary action

These are the reports we have received and we are collecting such reports If the hon Members are interested, we shall certainly place these reports before the House from time to time

I have dealt with the basic problems But as I said, these problems vary from time to time I will give you one example Take, for example, Bombay City. The urban area of Bombay is one of the biggest consuming areas of kerosene and kerosene is no longer a lighting fuel for the homes of the poor Today, kerosene is used as one of the principal cooking fuel by the middle class and upper middle class people in the urban areas Sir, the suburbs of Bom-

[Shri D. K. Borooah]

bay consume 15 per cent of the total production of kerosene. Kerosene is no longer used for lighting purposes only. This is required in the urban areas for cooking purposes also. Unless we are able to provide coal to the people in the urban areas, there will be more demand for kerosene, and ultimately, the common people in the rural areas will suffer. People in the urban areas have easy accessibility to kerosene. They are able to pay more and they use more kerosene to the detriment of the people in the rural areas. This is a fact. Therefore, what we are trying to do..

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Are you announcing further rise in the price of kerosene? Then, the speech is complete.

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: This is true, if we have to make kerosene available to the common people. I am talking of the rural people. I am talking of the people who do not have the advantage of electricity. For example, electricity came to my district only in 1956 or 1957. Before

that, three members of my family attained Ph. D. degrees. The point is, kerosene is not available in the rural areas. This is consumed more in the urban areas. The middle class and the upper middle class are using kerosene for cooking purposes. The common man in the rural areas is deprived of its use as a lighting fuel. This can be done only if coking coal is made available in large quantities to the people in the urban areas, for cooking purposes. This is a big problem.

Therefore, as I said, I cannot give any guarantee about kerosene, because the demand is increasing in the urban areas and that also among the middle classes. Therefore, if we want to make it available to the common man, as Shri Ramavatar Shastri wants, then we will have to have an alternative fuel for the middle classes in the urban areas.

18.56 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Thursday, March 14, 1974/Phalgun 23, 1895 (Saka).